



PART 4

THE OUTREACH COMMANDED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

This will be your opportunity to bear witness.

Luke 21:13

The term “soul-winner” has come to mean someone who leads others to Christ. We definitely need more *soul winners*. But technically speaking, *soul winner* is not the best term to describe the believer who lives out their responsibility to share the Gospel. The New Testament word, which more aptly describes this kind of believer, is: *witness*. Rather than the picture of a pushy, loud, brash, used-car salesman-type of soul-winner, the picture is of a quietly confident person who stands from the crowd by virtue of their life and message and is prepared to answer any questions and undergo any scrutiny they may have to. While some believers are specifically called to be preachers, all believers are called to be witnesses.

The local church is a community of witness to the Lord. We are responsible to evangelise our other-community as a church-community. This evangelism is not just preaching or the sharing the message, but training and teaching the message through a process called *discipleship*.



Further Reading



Study 13

THE

WITNESS

COMMANDED IN

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.

Proverbs 11:30

Personal evangelism is often called *soul winning*. Many preachers have encouraged their congregations to be soul-winners based on Proverbs 11:30 which commends those who *win* souls. But this Old Testament verse refers to *befriending* not *evangelism*. Perhaps more Christians should know how to apply to Proverbs 11:30 appropriately so that their circle of friends extends beyond their brothers and sisters. But I think we must be careful that we don't confuse our 'winning' of a soul with the Lord 'winning' of soul.

1. How does 1Corinthians 3:6 describe the various roles of evangelism?
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Rather than the term "soul-winner", the Bible uses the word: "*witness*". Not everybody is an evangelist, but all believers are called to be a *witness*.



2. What New Testament application might we draw from Proverbs 14:25?

3. What title or description is given to Jesus in Revelation 1:5?

The English word “witness” is the word Greek word “*martus*”. This is where we get the word *martyr*. It reveals that the New Testament writers meant that a *witness* was someone who *gave their life for their message*.

Faithful witnesses soon discover that God has often been at work in the lives they are sharing with.

4. What did Paul and Barnabas discover after they had preached in Antioch, Pisidia? (Acts 13:48)

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A WITNESS

(i) Questions

A witness is characterised by the role in answering *questions*. Witnesses for Christ stand out. Their very lives provoke questions.

5. How does a witness for Christ use the “permission principle”?

When not-yet-Christians ask a believer a question about their conversion they are giving the witness not just permission to share the Gospel, but also determining *how much* permission the witness has to share with them. For example, if a witness is asked *when* they became a Christian, they need to realise that this is a different question to *why* they became a Christian.



6. Has anyone ever asked you why you became a Christian? How did you respond? How would you respond differently in the future?

7. What does 1Peter 3:15 tell us to be always ready to do?

(ii) Testimony

A Christian witness's testimony is an example of the Gospel's power. It consists of a recognition of our life before Christ took our minds, the moment Christ captured us, and the transformation that has taken place in our lives to the glory of Christ. A good testimony is not merely a matter of using the right words (note 1Cor. 2:1).

8. What is your testimony? When is the last time you shared it?

In a court of law, a witness is called upon to share their testimony – what they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20; 22:15). You don't always have to have the right answers to everyone's questions, but you can always have the answer to a question about your own conversion.

(iii) Credibility

Credibility is another way of saying *trustworthiness*.

9. What can help or hinder a witness's credibility?

10. What appeal is made in these verses: John 21:24; 2Cor. 1:12; 3Jn 12?

11. Who did Jesus say would also help us to bear witness about Him? (Jn 15:26)



Jesus told His disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they had received the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 4:33; Rom. 15:19)

GOD'S ORDAINED MEANS

12. Fill in these blanks. There appears to be three means ordained by God the spreading of the Gospel. Firstly, *p* _____ *g* (1Corinthians 1:21). Secondly, the *w* _____ *s* of the believer (Acts 1:8). Thirdly the *p* _____ *s* of believers (1Tim. 2:1-4).

13. Jesus was the ultimate witness. What can we learn from His life based on these verses that will add potency to our witness?
Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 9:29; 11:1; 22:32-

14. What instructions did Jesus give His disciples in Luke 18:1?

When we speak of God *ordaining* someone to come to Christ it not only includes the ordained *result*, but the ordained *circumstances* and the ordained *means*.

15. According to 2Corinthians 2:12, how are opportunities to share the Gospel created?

16. What role does Colossians 4:3 sat we have in developing opportunities for Gospel witness?

As we seek to witness we can expect opposition (1Cor. 16:9) but 1Peter 3 teaches us that our consistent, quiet, godly lives will silence our critics. As well as living well, Ephesians 3:10 says that living in Christian community (being a member of a local church) will also add great weight to our witness. Please pray that you and we will be better witnesses.

Amen.